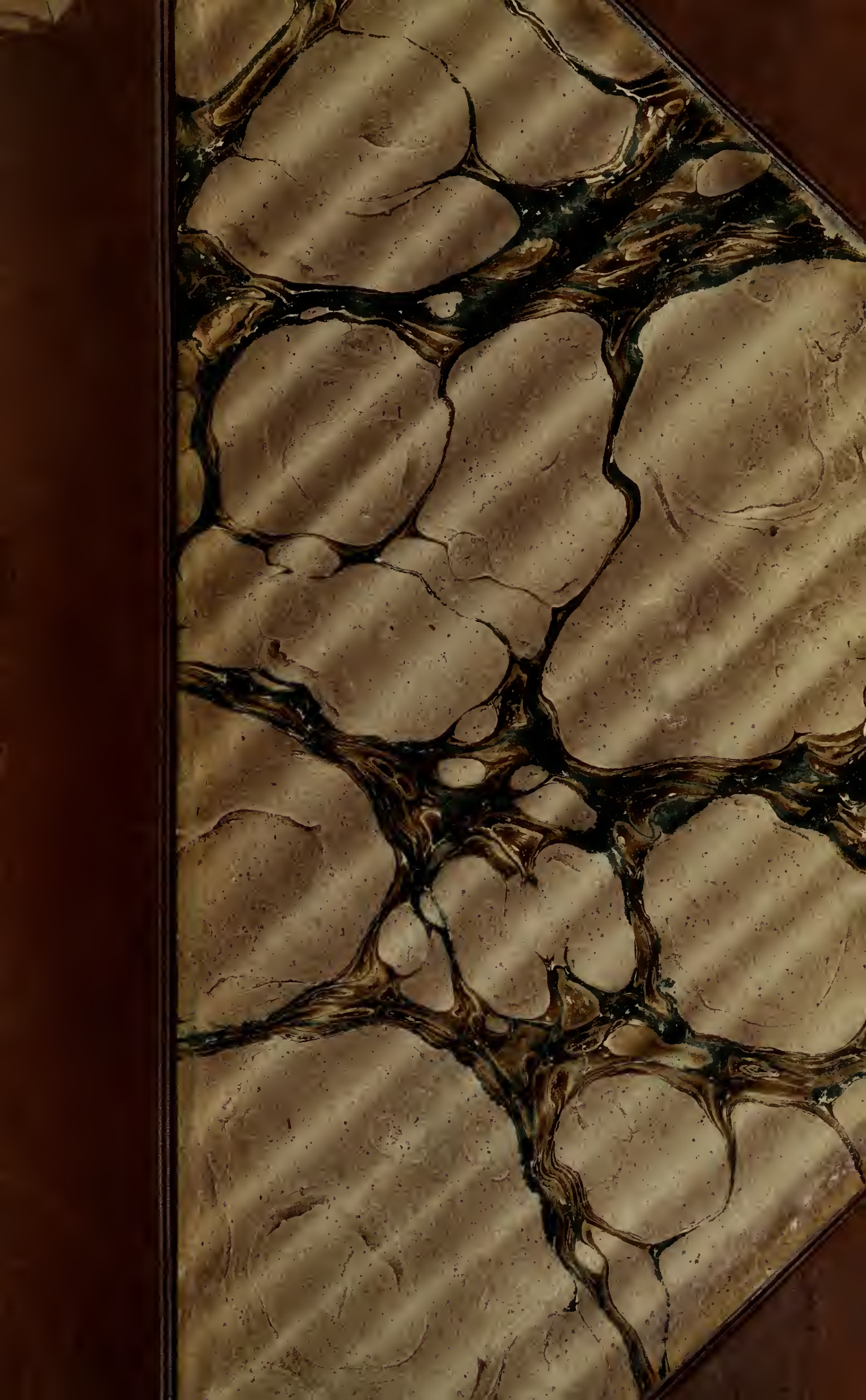

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ADDRESSES

BY

THE RIGHT HON.

GEORGE J. GOSCHEN

M.P.

DELIVERED IN EDINBURGH ON JAN. 31 AND FEB. 3,
AND IN LIVERPOOL ON FEB. 11, 1885

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Delivered in the Music Hall, on Saturday, 31st January 1885, to the Electors of the North-Eastern Division of the City of Edinburgh.

Mr. Goschen said—Gentlemen, my first duty is to thank you most heartily for this reception which you have given me; in the next place, let me say that I have come here invited to deliver a political address. I have come here to take counsel with a certain portion of my countrymen, thinking that the time is a fit one for public men who have been some time in the public service to confer with their fellow-citizens. (Cheers.) We have clearly arrived at a momentous crisis in the history of this country. New forces are coming to the front, and by a curious coincidence the new democracy (cheers) is enthroned in power at a moment very full of difficulties and troubles. There are fresh issues, both at home and abroad, coming up which demand solution; and I think that no one can look around him without seeing that the country, in many respects, at home and abroad, will be put upon its mettle. The temper of the new forces will be tried very soon; and the new recruits may come under fire, even before there has been time to discipline and train them. (Cheers.) But the graver the times, the more incumbent it seems to be on public men to speak out, and to say, each man according to his humble judgment and ability, that which he thinks ought to be said. And, gentlemen, you shall not have to complain of any reticence on my part. (Cheers.)

I have sometimes been called "dark," but I do not know why. I think that I have spoken at least with as much freedom upon most public questions as other men; indeed, sometimes my very frankness of expression has been laid to my charge, and a complaint has been raised against me because I have spoken out. It has been said, "Why does he publish any differences that he may have with some of his friends?" "What game is he up to?" is a question that is sometimes put (laughter and cheers); "What can he be driving at?" Then people say that I must be driving at office; or they think I must be wishing to weaken the Ministry, or to change

my party, or to form a cave. (Laughter.) They say there must be something more than meets the eye. Why, I ask, why? I will tell you who ask these questions. These questions are asked by those who think it impossible that a politician can be independent, unless he has some secret motive and some ulterior aim. (Cheers.) They think that he must probably be driving at Executive power—he must wish to sit upon the Treasury bench. Well, gentlemen, it is a worthy and a high ambition to wish to be a Minister; but there are other ambitions, too, which can stir a man to action, and rouse him to the performance of his duty. There are other positions outside the magic Ministerial circle where men may do work of which they need not be ashamed (cheers); and therefore I say I do not see why it is necessary always to suspect a secret motive. (Hear, hear.) For my part, I have fought many a battle with, and for, my party (loud cheers), and I hope to do so again (renewed cheers); but I cannot consent to be blindfolded with a party bandage, or to clap a party muzzle on my mouth. (Cheers.) Let me say one further thing, and that is this, that my allegiance to the principles, the Liberal principles, in which I have been brought up, has never been shaken (cheers); but I have been too long in public life always at once to acknowledge that a principle must be a principle of the old Liberal party, simply because it is so labelled. Public life would indeed be intolerable if every man, not himself in command, were at once to be tried by court-martial, because he refused to obey with absolute, and unquestioning, and blind obedience, the Government Whip. (Cheers.) We live in times when even Cabinet Ministers claim considerable independence of utterance (hear, hear, and a laugh), and when they are, or think themselves, entitled to submit independent programmes to their fellow-countrymen. (Cheers). If that be so, am I offending against political propriety when, on my part, I claim some little latitude both of action and of speech? (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, I am not going to waste your time to-night by discussing matters which have been settled once for all. (Cheers.) I am not going to say anything on the Bill for the Enfranchisement of Voters in Counties. I said my last word on that some time ago (hear, hear), and the Redistribution Bill is as good as settled; and though I have not agreed with my party upon this group of subjects, yet now I say this, that I will do as much as in one man's power lies to falsify my own misgivings (cheers), and I shall look accomplished facts boldly and cheerfully in the face. (Cheers.)

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There is only one remark that I should wish to make upon the mode in which the Redistribution Bill has been carried, and that is as to the extraordinary rapidity with which its details are being worked out. Now, to what is this due? It is due to the fact that the two great parties in the State seem to have agreed on the principles of the Bill, and are both anxious that it should come into force as soon as possible, and with as little friction as possible, Hence the rapidity with which all the details are being carried out. Not long ago, Europe thought that Great Britain was about to pass through an ordeal, under which her steady traditions, her love — her traditional love — of order and compromise would break down. But no. British common-sense has triumphed; and now, instead of having indignation meetings, culminating in riots, we have Boundary Commissioners settling the areas of political constituencies with as little difficulty, and with as little opposition, as if they were poor-law officers settling the boundary of a parish. (Cheers). What a contrast, gentlemen, to the way in which public business generally progresses! See—and I wish the country to note this fact—see what a reserve of power we possess for speedy action, and for effective action, when the nation is determined that its will shall be done. (Cheers.) That is a reserve of power that may stand us in good stead in some hour of emergency. (Hear, hear.) It might help us in foreign troubles. Suspend the action of party for a time, and foreign nations would note, and marvel when they saw, with what rapidity, with what decision, with what steadfastness, and with what unanimity, the voice of Great Britain and Ireland could speak. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, I am not here to-night, as I told you, to discuss the Redistribution Bill. You all know that there are a number of very interesting questions connected with it. There is the campaign that is going on now with regard to proportional representation; there is the question as to the wisdom of the subdivision of the great towns; and there are other questions of that kind. I do not propose to deal with them. With your permission, to-night, I want to look forward—I want to see what work is to be done. (Hear, hear.)

The question which is upon every man's lips at present, with regard to the future elector and the power he will wield, is this, What will he do with it? What will he do with his power? What can he do with it? What ought he to do with it? In what spirit

will he act, and in what spirit ought he to be addressed? (Cheers.) These are the questions which must occupy the mind, not only of every statesman, but of every one who takes an interest in politics.

To hear some men speak, one would think that it was necessary to introduce a set of brand-new principles for the use of the new elector, and that we must discard all the old methods and principles of the Liberal party, and toss them aside almost like old clothes. Well, there is, I think, no one in this room who is not agreed as to what the aim of every politician —and I mean by politicians, not those in authority only, but all who take an interest in politics—must be. We have a common aim, and that is to secure the greatest happiness for the greatest number. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I should like to repeat it, because it is the cardinal point—I say that the object of all politics must be to secure the greatest happiness for the greatest number (loud cheers) — to endeavour to spread the prosperity of this country over an ever-widening area of the population (cheers). Every one would think it a miserable failure, politically and economically and socially, if this country were simply to be the paradise of the rich. That would be a miserable failure (hear, hear, and cheers); but I wish to ask, Has this ideal dawned upon the Liberal party for the first time now? I thought that that had been our aim for some time past. I thought that we had been at work upon it. I thought that it was for that that we had been struggling throughout the history of the Liberal party. (Cheers.) Before we entirely part company with the traditions and the principles of the old Liberal party, let us, at all events, look to what they have done. We fancied that they had secured some prosperity, some pre-eminence to this country; we thought that they had struck off the fetters from industry; we thought that they had promoted the union of classes, till classes were less antagonistic in this country than in other nations abroad; we thought that they had redeemed this country from untold calamities which have fallen upon other countries; and so we thought that we owed something to the Liberal party, and to the Liberal principles and traditions in which we had been brought up; and that we could not be prepared to discard those methods at a moment's notice. We recognise that work in the future has to be done—and much work too; but we, many of us, wish to set about this new work in the old spirit, and I trust the country will recognise that the statesmen, who for

so many years have been responsible to this country, have not been idle or indifferent in the performance of their work. (Cheers.)

But, gentlemen, we have lately had a different picture presented to us; and one would think, from some things that have been said, that it would be necessary to have recourse to extremely violent measures in order to remedy a system of glaring social and financial wrong. It is said that we have built up a system of taxation which is not only imperfect—all systems of taxation are imperfect—but which is fundamentally unjust. But I should like to ask, before we condemn this system of taxation—grievously as it may bear upon many parts of the community—before we condemn it as absolutely unjust, whether it deserves the reproduction of the story that there was only the difference of an adverb between the taxation bearing upon one class and that bearing upon another—that it bore hardly upon the poor and hardly at all upon the rich? If we think of this saying in regard to our present system of taxation, let me ask, Who is responsible for the system of taxation under which we live at present? Whose system is it? —a system elaborated with greater care, with greater industry, with greater skill, than that prevailing in any other civilised community. Whose system is it, I ask? It is his who is the greatest financial genius of this century. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) It is his whose magic wand has touched our finances, and who has brought them to a point which makes them the admiration of every country in Europe. (Cheers.) It is the system of Mr. Gladstone (loud cheers); and, for my part, I am not prepared to stand by in silence without registering an emphatic protest against language which would bid the new democracy signalise its advent to power by the dethronement of Gladstonian finance. (Cheers.)

But I said something about the spirit in which the new electors might be addressed. If it were right and proper, at this first moment of their enfranchisement, to say to them, "Look what you have suffered in the past; look how unjust the system is under which you are living; shift your burden upon others; strike at other classes; push your own class interests"—and that without a word as to corresponding obligations, without a word to lift them to a high and worthy conception of common national duty, without a word to inspire them with zeal for the union of classes—then many persons would be disposed to think that no prophecies could have been too gloomy, and no prospects before us could be more dis-

astrous; then it might be thought that the new electors had stormed the constitution in the spirit of an enemy storming a town, who demands a ransom for abstaining from plunder. (Cheers.) But it is not in that spirit, I am firmly convinced, that our fellow-countrymen have entered the pale of the Constitution, to share with us the high duty and the privilege of governing the State. It is not in that spirit that they will set themselves to the functions of their new citizenship. They will push their class interests, as others have done before them; they will fight for their interests; but they will not think that they have done their whole duty by the country, these new arbiters of the destinies of Britain—I say they will not think that they have done their duty simply by a drastic application of the principle of self-interest. I, who have opposed the late measures of reform, am absolutely convinced that this will not be their spirit; and I trust that those who would claim their ear as their special champions will prove by their words and by their acts that they have an equal belief in them. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, the situation, then, that to my mind presents itself is this:—We have a common aim. Our aim is, as I said before, to secure the greatest happiness for the greatest number, and we shall not be content unless this prosperity widens over a larger area of the population. We shall all be agreed—the extreme faction, the centre, and the moderates—that we ought to utilise the momentum given by the new Reform Bills to fetch up our arrears of legislation. We shall all be agreed that there are many new needs which require to be faced. New needs spring up in every society. It would be folly not to recognise these new wants; in this we can all act together. But there are many Liberals who are thoroughly sound in heart, thoroughly sound in Liberal principles, who do not believe that it is necessary to have a policy of root-and-branch changes in everything—in our treatment of taxation, in our treatment of contracts, of the interference of the State, of the independence of individuals, accompanied with large changes in the relations of classes to each other—that it is necessary to have recourse to such methods in order to secure our common aim. They will go forward with equal resolution, but with more prudence, and with less passion—they will believe less in the omnipotence of legislation; they will face new problems, but in the old spirit—they will go forward, I say, with equal resolution, though disbelieving in crude panaceas, which

have been proved, over and over again, to be useless for the accomplishment of the aims they have in view. (Cheers.)

Now, gentlemen, I used the words "crude panaceas," and I will tell you what I mean. I call the Nationalisation of Land a crude panacea. (Cheers and some hisses.) I call the establishment of a vast bureaucratic system for the distribution of land a crude panacea. (Cheers.) I should call the establishment of a Land Court to fix rents in every part of the United Kingdom a crude panacea. I should say this, Let us try freedom first (hear, hear), before we try the interference of the State. Let me say one word more, not very complimentary to the panaceas, before I part with them. These panaceas are like strong drink, which spoil the appetite for wholesome food. (Laughter). Public attention is diverted from many useful, practical, and practicable reforms because these visionary schemes have been put forward. (Cheers.) In all the points on which I propose to touch, I want to plead the cause of freedom against State interference, and that is one of the old Radical doctrines. (Hear, hear.) Don't let me be told that I am not a Liberal if I am in favour of freedom in all the respects to which I am going to call your attention. It is the old Radical doctrine that you should try freedom first, before you attempt to interfere by the State. (Cheers.)

Let me take the question of Land. I am for absolute freedom in land. (Cheers.) I am anxious—I trust that, though I am addressing a town audience, they will not be bored (if I may use the expression) by some reference to land (cheers)—I am anxious to strike off any fetters still remaining on the owners of land, which prevent them dealing in the freest possible way with their land. (Cheers.) I wish to see land made as saleable as Consols. (Cheers.) The Liberal party have been working in two directions already in this respect. They have been trying to free the owner, so that he could dispose of his land with greater ease than heretofore; and they have been trying to assist the tenant by giving him more freedom in the cultivation of his land, and more freedom for investing capital by giving him greater security for his improvements. (Cheers.) I have been in perfect sympathy with both those movements. I was in sympathy with the Bill which was passed by the Government to deal with the latter question; but I entertain very strong opinions indeed with regard to this freedom of land, this saleability of land, because I hold—and I go there as far almost as any of my political friends—that it is greatly for

the interest of this country to increase the number of landholders (cheers), and to promote as far as possible what I may call the dispersion of land amongst a much larger number of people. (Loud cheers.) A good deal has been done in regard to freeing the owner; I do not forget that Lord Cairns passed a Settled Estates Act; but I still think the fact is clear, land is not as saleable as Consols. In fact, as was pointed out by Mr. Bright yesterday or the day before (cheers), there are still a vast number of legal complications, and I know that if a landlord wished to sell 1000 acres of his land to ten, or twenty, or fifty people the legal difficulties would be enormous (hear, hear), and that you cannot dispose of your land in such a manner as to encourage men to sell it. The most willing owner finds himself surrounded with a great many difficulties. So I say this—Let Liberals work forward on that line, and let them not rest till land is infinitely more saleable than at present. (Hear, hear.) I will suggest what may be considered a very advanced doctrine in this respect. I am not sure that we shall ever have reached the goal of our endeavours, and have attained a thoroughly satisfactory position, unless we have every title to land registered—unless we have a perfect register of titles throughout the United Kingdom. (Cheers.) I should like to see what I would call a Land Register in every great local centre; and I should wish it to be a kind of agricultural ledger, in which transfers of land might take place, with not very much greater difficulty than transfers of Consols take place in the Bank of England. (Cheers.) Now, that is something which I think it is worth while to work forward to. The lawyers will say, I am afraid, that it is absolutely impossible; but it has been done in other countries, where the complications of tenure are not less than they are in this country. And so, I say, let us see at least whether we cannot work forward on these lines. I think you will agree that that is sound Liberal doctrine. (Cheers.)

But I am sure that in some senses it is Conservative as well. The old system of tying up land was intended to assist the territorial aristocracy. At that time the owning of land was a kind of pivot on which Conservatism turned, but that is all changed; and now the danger is the other way. The danger is, that land should be in the hands of too few people, and the great safeguard for the owners, and for the public interest generally, is that land should be held

by a largely increased number of people. (Cheers.) My experience at the Poor-Law Board quite confirmed me in that view. The fact that our agricultural classes are without any possessions at all, that nearly the whole of them live on weekly wages, immensely increases the difficulties in dealing with that which is one of the most serious troubles of this country—I mean the Poor Law. From a social point of view, I do not think you can exaggerate the advantage of having a large number of small proprietors; and I am not convinced by any argument that tells me that if you proceed on these lines the aggregate produce of the country will be less. I can conceive that it would be better that less produce should be raised in the country at large, while having a larger number of landed proprietors, than to see the whole land of the country remaining in the hands of a few, with a larger aggregate produce from the soil. (Cheers.) You must look to the political and to the social advantages as well as to the economic effect; but I am not at all convinced that even from the economic point of view in these days, it would not be more profitable, even as regards the raising of produce from the soil, to have the land held amongst a vastly increased number of owners. (Cheers.)

Well, gentlemen, these are my views upon making land saleable. But it is said that there is no desire to buy land in this country—that do what you will, you will not be able to find a large number of small agriculturists who will care to buy. I say, at all events, give them the chance. (Cheers.) One thing is certain, I think, and that is, that there are plenty of owners who are anxious to sell. (Laughter.) Land is not such a very encouraging possession at this moment that there are not a large number of owners prepared to sell; but why do not people buy? I still believe that it is in consequence of great difficulties, as regards transfer, settlement, entail, and all the legal difficulties of the case; and therefore I say, give them the chance. The owners also, I should think, would thank you for legislation in this respect, because in this you are not striking at the rights of property; you are increasing the rights of the existing owner. It is bad for the country that the existing owner should be hampered by the dead hand of his ancestors. (Hear, and cheers.) I say, let the living hand grasp the living soil. (Cheers.) But there is one thing I do not see my way to, and that is any artificial planting of the agricultural labourer upon plots of land, to be bought by local communities and

distributed amongst them. I do not see that we can be very hopeful that many men will avail themselves of the opportunity of purchasing because we know that it is to a great extent a question of wages, and that the high wages paid in our towns are a counter-attraction—and that our colonies are a counter-attraction. But never mind; I say, give them the chance—let us have freedom in dealing with land as we have freedom in dealing with everything else. (Cheers.)

There is a counter-plan which is sometimes run—viz., the "three F's"—Fair rents, Free sale, and Fixity of tenure. Well, I would ask you to be rather careful when you have these trilogies, because I want to point out to you, that it frequently happens that two out of the three terms are destructive of one another, and antagonistic to one another. Take, for instance, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Liberty and equality almost destroy each other. (Oh.) Liberty is the power to possess as much as you please or as little as you please, to work, to get forward, to rise in the scale of life, if you can. Equality is against all that, and says every man must be exactly the same as his neighbour. (Cries of No, no; laughter, cheers, and some hissing.) I should like to argue that out, because I have a very strong opinion about it. Equality in France killed liberty. (Hear, hear; hisses and cheers.) I am astonished that that is not accepted. (A voice, "That's right.") I am not speaking against equality in the slightest degree. I am only showing that these catch-phrases of three words often involve fallacies. I want to show to you that fair rents and free sale are incompatible.

Consider the following argument: the idea of fair rent is a fixed rent—a rent fixed by a Court. Well, the Court fixes the rent, and says that is a fair rent, and the tenant cannot be asked to pay any more. But he has also got "free sale," and he sells his tenancy to another man, who pays him a large price for it. The new tenant has got to pay the old fair rent, but he has got to pay, besides, the interest of the capital which he has paid to the tenant who sold to him. Therefore the new rent is the old rent *plus* the interest upon the capital which he has had to pay (cheers); and so he is paying a new rent which is unfair, because the Court has said that it is the lower rent which is fair. So "free sale" has killed "fair rent." (Laughter and cheers.) You may either have free sale or you may have fair rent, but I confess I do not see how you can have both.

I go for free sale on the part of the owners, and I believe most Liberals will do the same. (Cheers.) I say that the "three F's" are not applicable to the United Kingdom. I won't say anything of any special circumstances that may require special legislation; but, taking the United Kingdom as a whole, you cannot apply that system to the United Kingdom without disturbing the whole agricultural industry, and running counter, I believe, to all the habits of farmers and labourers, and to the whole mode in which agriculture is carried on. (Cheers.) But I have given you what I consider to be a clear line for Liberals to follow in this respect—absolute saleability of land, and no rest till we have accomplished that. (Cheers.) Here, again, you will remark how these crude panaceas may divert men's attention away from that which I believe to be the true line of Reform.

I turn, with your permission, to a subject in which I have always taken the deepest possible interest, and that is, a genuine and sweeping reform in local government in all those parts of the country where no local government worthy of the name exists; which reform should be followed by something else equally important, namely, a thorough review of all the duties of the central authority and the local authority respectively, with a view to as much decentralisation as possible. (Cheers.) I have been at work upon this question for the last fifteen years. I introduced a Bill on the subject as a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government as far back as 1871, and for my part I have been deeply disappointed that time has not permitted this, which I consider to be a most important question, to have been carried out. (Cheers.) I have spoken on this subject in season and out of season. I have introduced it into speeches to audiences who much preferred party hits to any discussion upon local government, and who probably found what I said to be intolerably dull. (Laughter.) I have bored audiences with this topic of local government, but I have been very persistent, and now I confess that I see with considerable satisfaction that many of my arguments and much of my plan are being presented to the new democracy with every chance of their being accepted. (Cheers.) And let me tell you here, as citizens of Edinburgh, Do not think, because you have such excellent municipal institutions yourselves, that this is not a question which concerns you. I am not anxious only for the direct and immediate advantages to be derived from better local government in the counties. They will secure, no doubt, better roads, cheaper administration, better sani-

tary arrangements, better government in many ways; but that, to my mind, is only half the battle. What I want to see, and what I have pleaded for, is this, that in all local communities there should be more civic life, such as you have in your large towns. I am not content that the dwellers in the country, the agricultural labourers, should have no other idea of civic authority than the tramp of a policeman or an official of a workhouse. (Laughter and cheers.) That is not what the civic views of the agricultural labourer should be. I know in other countries that there is scarcely a village where every one does not know who is the head of his community, and who are the responsible people; but here in this country there are Boards of Guardians, there are Sanitary Boards, Boards of Health, but there is no real civic life such as you have in the big towns; and it is that which I wish to see secured for all the agricultural communities throughout the United Kingdom. (Cheers.)

Some of you may remember that it was the absence of training for civic life which excited some misgivings in my mind with regard to the political enfranchisement of these classes. I knew that in towns, all citizens had been trained, through municipal institutions, to the performance of political duties. At all events, let those who have admitted the agricultural labourer with satisfaction to the political franchise, now do their best to assist him also to civic enfranchisement, to assist him in every way to have a government worthy of the name throughout the local communities in the length and breadth of the land, and to train him in the performance of public duties. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, there are other arguments in favour of this increase in civic life, and especially in the new distribution of functions between the central government and the local authority. There are many new needs arising, to which I have alluded already—partly sanitary, partly civic; and I think that the danger of many of these movements—for there is danger in some of them—will be decreased if those new duties, involving great questions as they do, are put upon the local authority, instead of being put upon the State. (Cheers.) If you put them upon the State, you disguise the expense. You may have some vast system which will cost the country a deal of money, and you won't see, or you will not know, that you are paying for it. But all such taxation adds to the aggregate; it increases the burdens upon industry, it helps to check production, and handicaps you in your relations to the foreigner. The

taxation is there, even if you do not see it. But if it is put upon the local authority, you may be certain of one thing, and that is, that the local authority will be pulled up before it is too late. (Laughter and cheers.) The greatest master in modern finance once told me that many nations had broken down under the burden of their imperial taxation, but none had broken down under their local burdens. (Cheers.) Depend upon it, gentlemen, it is wiser now, in these days of what is called State Socialism—it is wiser to strengthen your local authorities; and then, through these local authorities, to deal with some of those questions which, in the hands of the State, are so much more dangerous. (Cheers.)

But let me say one word more, if you will allow me (cheers), upon this question of local government and these new wants. I am anxious that there should be as much put upon them as the State can give them, because the State is overworked. The State breaks down under the many functions it has to fulfil. (Cheers.) And, therefore, see the immense advantage you have. You will relieve the State; you will enable it to perform its functions better than it has been performing them hitherto, and, at the same time, you will be raising your civic life by making it more responsible and more independent. (Cheers.) Therefore, I say move forward—and this is worthy of the Liberal party—move forward on those lines.

Let me say one word upon this question—how far, when you have burdened the local community with new functions which come from the State, and with some new functions which must be placed upon it to meet the increasing needs of the country—how far is it wise to endeavour to *seek work*, and, if I am not using too strong an expression, to attempt to take the working-man in hand, to interfere with him at every step, and to manage his affairs for him? This is not only a question for the ratepayers. I think there is a great danger that there should be too much patronage of the working-classes, which the working-classes themselves will resent, and which they will not welcome. (Cheers.) I should think it infinitely wiser to run—if I may say so—voluntary association, voluntary cooperation upon the part of working-men, against the constant tendency to increase official inspection and official interference with them, be it imperial or be it local. (Cheers.) We cannot too much recognise or pay too great a compliment to what

the British working-classes have done in this respect. As our Parliamentary institutions have been examples and patterns to Parliaments everywhere, so have these societies, the voluntary societies of the English working-classes, been models for those elsewhere. Is there any one who cannot sympathise with those great friendly societies, which have shown that there is no incompatibility whatever between capital and labour? I had myself the pleasure of addressing 500 delegates from a friendly society which owned five millions sterling in the Funds. (Cheers.) I rejoiced to see the extreme skill with which they administered their affairs. There is plenty of room still, I hope and believe, for co-operation and for association, and I believe that they will do far better to follow in those lines, especially when they look abroad and see what is being done with regard to what I have called State Socialism, where there is a combination for the patronage of the working-classes, composed of the bureaucracy, the priests, and the Socialists. Those three classes in Germany are combining together against voluntary co-operation, and in favour of constant State interference (cheers); but I trust the English working-classes will never be led away by a nightmare of that kind, but that they will still continue to be as they have been hitherto, the best representatives of the power of joint working together for joint common action. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Gentlemen, I must, I am afraid, take you to one more social topic. (Cheers). I would say one word upon that whole class of questions involved in the housing of the poor, and on sanitary questions generally. (Cheers.) I must speak with reserve upon the housing of the poor, because I am a member of the Commission, which has not yet made its report; but this I can say without reserve, that both in this and in all sanitary questions, I am for enforcing liability—individual liability—and for bringing home the fact to those who are responsible that they must do their duty first before the community is asked to do their duty for them. (Cheers.) I am afraid that here, too, wild schemes may damage the more hum-drum reforms; but I say that there is not nearly enough execution of the laws which enact liabilities. Sometimes it may be due to defects in the law itself, to weak clauses, or to the failure of the authorities to whom the execution of these laws is committed, and sometimes, also, to public opinion, which goes to sleep; but, at all events, we ought to continue upon the lines of making house-owners, and the owners of any other kind of property,

do their duty according to the legislation in force and according to their contracts. Much can be done in this respect even before you have recourse to other remedies. An immense deal is done now-a-days by inspectors, but much slips through the fingers of inspectors. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I know it is rather a craze of mine, but I dislike the idea of a tremendous army of inspectors spreading over the whole length and breadth of the land; and I am much more in favour of seizing a recalcitrant and culpable man, and punishing him if he does not do his duty. (Cheers.) I am against relieving him too much and instituting any action of the State to do his duty for him.

Now, I hope that the topics I have put before you, though serious, have not been entirely without interest. (Cheers.) They are those which we come across, most of them, in our daily life. But I now approach a subject which I know has very considerable interest for a great portion of the citizens of this city, and of many other cities, and that is the Licensing question. (Cheers.) I am in favour of the plan of transferring the duty of licensing to the local authorities. (Hear, hear.) I am in favour of giving popular control over the licences (cheers); but as for a Bill, which I have seen, which prohibits altogether the sale of drink, I am not in its favour, and I will tell you why. (Loud cheers and some hisses.) It is far better to be quite candid. I am in favour of giving the popular voice the power of closing public-houses on Sundays; but when you come to say this, that you are to stop the sale of drink altogether, I will say that it would require an overwhelming demonstration of the wish of the working-classes upon that subject before legislation ought to take place (hear, hear, and cheers); and I would not listen very seriously upon such an immensely important topic as that to anybody except the people absolutely certain to be affected by it, because—I wish to put this argument most briefly before you—I conceive that the upper and middle classes would exempt themselves from all the inconveniences involved in this legislation, while the working-classes would feel its full effect. Therefore I say it is entirely a question for the working-classes themselves. (Cheers.) Look at this—I have studied a bill upon the subject, and it prohibits the sale of drink, but it does not prohibit the purchase of drink, nor does it prevent drinking (laughter and cheers). Therefore, supposing by an overwhelming majority the inhabitants of a

certain city, or a district of the city, had passed a self-denying ordinance and said, "We will make it criminal to sell drink in this district," why, what would the upper and middle classes do? (Cheers.) Members of the upper classes would order six dozen of wine from a merchant in the next district (laughter), or they would lay in each, according to his ability, a certain stock; they would send for half-a-dozen of whisky, or three bottles of whisky, from the neighbouring place. (Laughter.) I could see the force of your saying, "We will make it criminal for a man to drink;" but I do not see how you can carry your object by simply making it criminal to sell, if your neighbours are going to sell; and a splendid business they would do at the expense of the self-denying community. (Laughter.) Therefore, if any one comes to me and says, "It is our bounden duty to put down drunkenness," I say, yes; and I will assent to all practical methods by which it can be done (cheers); but you must first show me that the law cannot be evaded; and you must first show me that those who will most be affected by it, who cannot lay in a stock, whose wages do not admit of their doing more than buying a small portion at a time, and therefore who will not have the facilities for going to neighbouring places to buy their drink; you must show me that there is such an overwhelming majority on their part that no great injustice or inconvenience will take place. (Cheers). These are my views, which I have told you frankly (cheers); and I may add that in accordance with these principles, which I am afraid I have enforced at almost too great a length upon you, I am against the majority coercing the minority. (Cheers, some hisses, and counter cheers.) Well, I do not in the slightest degree resent the expression of dissent. I quite feel that it is an open question. To me it is not open, nor to the gentlemen who have expressed their disapproval; but it is a question upon which an argument may be made. But do not let us, who do not go so far as others, be taxed with any want of interest in the subject. All we say is this: We think that that very drastic legislation which is proposed would defeat its own object (cheers); but short of that we will go with you. We will do all that we can in order to diminish the number of public-houses. (Cheers.) We are prepared to put the licensing in the hands of the authorities, and to give effect to any practical legislation that is put before us.

Now, gentlemen, I really do not know at what length it is

right for me to detain you. (Cries of "Go on.") There are two subjects more upon which I should like to say a word (cheers), and one is the question of Taxation—a subject that will come home to a great many of you. I have already alluded to the fact that the system under which we are living at present is a system which has been elaborated with the greatest possible care, and which has been constructed practically by the greatest living statesman of the century (cheers), and I think that we shall not approach with light hearts the destruction of that system. Every system of that kind is of course imperfect, and there is work which I know Mr. Gladstone would wish to have done. There is the improvement in the Death-duties—a subject which has long commanded the attention of the Ministry, and with which, I believe, they are prepared to deal as soon as time permits. But when we hear of questions like the graduated Income-tax, then I say to myself, must not Mr. Gladstone's hair stand on end when he hears of doctrines being propounded which he has combated with so much eloquence and with so much success. These are views which are now put forward, and are put forward, I think, with some crudity, and without having really been thought out. I should be doing the subject an injustice if I were to-night to argue against a graduated Income-tax. The matter is one of such extreme importance that it cannot be dealt with satisfactorily towards the conclusion of a speech. But let me point out this, that there are a number of questions which have to be considered. You have to consider, not only how far your system of taxation touches the individual, but how it will affect the community generally. It is not enough to say, "How will it bear upon this man or that?" But taxes have frequently been proposed which would drive capital out of the country; and while you were attempting to shift a burden, you might be striking at the whole springs of industry. (Hear, hear.) Taxation is a matter that cannot be dealt with in this light spirit. And may I venture to put one suggestion before you, when it is said that burdens should be entirely shifted, and it is this: Have we not heard that taxation and representation ought always to go together? We have heard this argument very often, that because the working-classes bore their share in the burdens of the State, therefore they ought to be represented. I don't think the working-classes themselves would deny the converse of the proposition, that if they are represented they will also bear, and

willingly bear, their share in the burdens of the State. (Cheers.) We have to think how these matters will affect the whole course of legislation; and I do not think that there are many statesmen who would venture to suggest that, when the whole power has been put in the hands of a class, because the great multitudes are now the arbiters of the destinies of this country, that moment should be taken to point out to them that they should shift their burdens upon others.

Then there are others who bring forward the idea of Protective Duties. Protective Duties in these days! I wonder how many Scotsmen are in favour of a return to Protection! (Laughter.) Would not Adam Smith turn in his grave if he heard some of the nonsense which is talked about Fair Trade in these days? But, again, it is too large a subject upon which to embark at this moment. Protection ought not to be dealt with as I saw it dealt with in a speech not long ago, when it was said, "I can show you a better method. I won't give Protection to the land; but I will give the land itself. That will be an easy solution of the doctrine of Protection." (Laughter.) Protection must be fought with other weapons than that. Nothing has struck me with greater admiration than to see how the working-classes have stood the depression of trade, and how little effect has been made upon them, even by the advocates of Fair Trade. (Cheers.) The working-classes may ask this, and they may ask it fairly—I have never yet seen this argument answered—"You tell us that we are suffering because we have Free Trade? Is there not Protection in Germany? Is there not Protection in France? and is their commercial or industrial position one whit better than it is in this country? (Cheers.) Are they not suffering, though they are steeped to the very lips in Protection, even in a greater ratio than the British workman, from the badness of the times?" (Cheers.) No, gentlemen, I trust that the British workman will stand by his colours as he has done hitherto in this matter (cheers), that again he will reject crude panaceas, and that he will know that it is by his industry and his freedom that he will best meet the difficulties of the time. (Cheers.)

Now, I think I may fairly claim that in almost all that I have said upon the question of Land, upon the question of Local Government, upon the question of individual Independence, and against State Interference, I am in sympathy with the great bulk of the Liberal party. (Cheers.) I believe that I am in sympathy with three-fourths of the Cabinet upon these questions. I believe that I am a truer

disciple of the Prime Minister on these questions (cheers) than some of those recent speakers who, perhaps, officially at least, may be said to be nearer and dearer to him. (Laughter.) I do not believe that our great Liberal leaders have sympathy with raising at this moment the question of the natural rights of man to the property of his neighbour (hear, and a laugh); nor do I believe that they hold the theory of ransom or insurance. And I would plead very earnestly with my fellow-countrymen, both in this room and out of it, to ask themselves this: Whether it is a fair picture to give of this country and its society, to represent it as consisting of two camps—the camp of the rich and the camp of the poor (cheers)—standing as it were in antagonism to each other? That is not my view of the state of society in this country. It appears to me that there are an immense number and variety of classes all shading off the one into the other; so that it would be difficult to say where the rich end, where the middle classes begin, where the middle classes end, and where the industrial classes begin. Thank God, in this country men rise from one class into another. (Cheers.) Thank God, these class distinctions are more and more being broken down. (Cheers.) The interest of one class is the interest of another class; and the teaching is dangerous, which would incense one class against the other. (Cheers.) And when it is argued that ransom is to be paid, may I ask to whom is it to be paid? What happens in this question is this, that the destitute and the helpless are confounded in one sentence with the independent, well-to-do working-class artisans; and then remedies that might be necessary for the destitute, and a kind of patronising sympathy that might be suitable for paupers, are raised into a kind of plea for a war by the working-classes generally against capital. Surely that is not the view of society which the working-classes of this country will accept. They will not believe in this antagonism between classes. It may be said that these views are but vague generalities, and that when the measures are stated by which these subversive generalities are to be carried out, those measures do not look so very big after all. But the seed cannot be sown without its taking root, and a man who has sown seed in a field might as well try to go and pick back the seed he has sown, and gather it into his sack again, as men who have pronounced dangerous doctrines can attempt to take them back. (Cheers.) And so, gentlemen, I trust you will pardon me if I have thought it necessary to make some protest against doctrines of that kind. The protests will come

—I am sure they will come—from those who are responsible for the party and to the party; but time must not be allowed to elapse between the enunciation of such doctrines and some protest. Those protests ought to come not only from one class, but from all; for this is not a question for the upper or for the middle classes only, it is a question for the working-classes quite as much, in which not only their interests, but their honour and their duty are concerned. There are two policies that can be put before the country. The one is a policy of union, freedom, justice, and common sense; the other is a policy of class conflicts and wild dreams. I know which the country will choose in the end; and I know too which I believe the democracy will choose. If I had the right, which I have not, to appeal to the democracy, I know the language I should use. I should say, You have succeeded to the government of this old and great country, not like the French democrats after a violent revolution, and through a reign of blood; you have not succeeded to government like your Australian fellow-citizens, who have grown up with the growth of the country, and have to deal with comparatively simple issues; but you have succeeded to the government of a vast and an old empire, with classes whose interests have become complicated through centuries; you have been invited to take part in that government with the full approval of all classes of the community. You have high and important duties; you will look to it that that common-sense and fair play which have characterised the history of the United Kingdom in the past shall continue so to characterize it in the future; and if you have reproaches against the classes that have ruled before, because they have followed too much their own interests—you, the democracy, will show that you take a higher view of the duties to which you have been called. You will remember how Great Britain is the mother of Parliaments. You will remember how, throughout the world, upon the destinies of this country depends also the well-being of countless millions. And remembering all this, I believe that the new democracy will do its duty, if those who aspire to lead it will only tell the truth. (Loud cheers.)

SECOND ADDRESS.

Delivered in the Literary Institute, on Tuesday, 3d February 1885, *to the Rosebery Club.*

Mr. Goschen said—My Lords and Gentlemen, I have to thank this Scottish audience for its cordial reception of me this evening, and I shall endeavour to reciprocate the kindness of that reception. An hour or two ago I received a letter—not a threatening letter (laughter)—and not an anonymous letter, but one from a gentleman who is present this evening, and who warned me of a danger into which I might fall. He said that I might use the terms England and English, where I ought to use the terms Britain and British. (Laughter.) I am all for a united Empire, and it is upon that subject that I wish to address you this evening. I am for the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland (cheers); and I only wish that I knew an adjective to suit my purpose. I must not say English, because it does not include Scottish; but if I say British, does it include Ireland? (Laughter.) Therefore, pardon me should I fall into mistakes, and trust me that, whatever adjective or substantive I use, I am one of those who believe we are a united Empire, and am determined that, so far as one man can contribute to that object, this Empire shall remain one at home and abroad. (Cheers.)

Lord Reay in his most striking address last night, spoke of a possible repugnance that might be felt by audiences at this moment to have their attention turned from domestic affairs to foreign and colonial subjects. I do not know how that may be, but I am here to contend that it is difficult to draw a line; and I am not sure that I could tell you, if I wished it, where a home question ends and where a colonial question begins. (Cheers.) Is the question of our trade not a home question? Is the question of the outlet of our surplus population not a home question? Is the question of markets for our manufacturers not a home question, and a very vital home question too? And if, through our union with the colonies, our home prosperity is affected for better or for worse, I am here to contend that you cannot say that anyone who speaks

upon a colonial question is departing from the circle of subjects which vitally interest all classes of the community. (Cheers.)

Let it not be said that this is a question of sentiment which only concerns the cultured classes. I am not one of those who would depreciate sentiment in politics, for so long as men are what they are, and nations are what they are, sentiment, whether we wish it or not, will play a very decided part in politics. (Cheers.) We cannot ignore it. But it is not in the spirit of sentiment that I shall approach this question this evening. I wish to press home that which was urged by Lord Reay last night, which has been urged by my friend Mr. Forster, and which is being urged now, I am glad to say, in many quarters. I wish to see interest taken in these colonial subjects. The question of the united Empire, the question of our Colonies, is to a great extent a working-man's question. It is they who supply the chief number of the emigrants who go forth to seek their fortunes beyond the seas. It is they who work at the manufactures that are sold to our Australian fellow-subjects; it is they who would feel the effects if, in the course of the destinies of this country, any calamity should break up the colonial empire. And so I say this is a question that cannot be ignored, and that the working-classes must take up; they must hold their statesmen and their public men responsible for attention being paid to our colonial empire. (Cheers.)

I do not think that this is a subject which I need elaborate much before an audience of Scotsmen, because, as was pointed out by Lord Reay last night, Scotland, of all the various parts of this Empire, is the one, perhaps, which furnishes the most successful colonists. I was at one time Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Few names came before me except Scottish names. (Cheers.) There were Grahams, there were Donalds. Then look at the Premiers of Canada. They are either Macdonalds or they are Mackenzies. Go to India; look to banking in China; and wherever you look you find Jardines and Mathesons, Wallaces and Crawfords. Wherever you go you find the most successful men to be Scotsmen—in fact, if you were to make a list of the most successful bankers, merchants, and traders in the colonies, it would look uncommonly like a Scottish directory. (Cheers.) Therefore I do not think I need elaborate this question of the interest which you must feel in your colonies. But mark this. The colonists are now more and more being brought into contact with the subjects of foreign

Powers. Europe, more than at perhaps any period, is becoming a colonising and a maritime Europe; and our colonial fellow-subjects are beginning to have neighbours. And, therefore, if you go with me so far that you are vitally interested in colonial matters, you cannot put away foreign questions. You may think that you have little interest in them. It is not so. You are interested in the colonies, and the colonies are gravely affected by many foreign questions.

On Saturday I spoke to another audience of the duties of the democracy at home. I hope to be allowed this evening to say something with regard to its duties abroad; and the state of Europe is such—the attitude of foreign Powers is such, the events which are passing around us, or which are passing beyond the seas—in Africa, in Australia, in India—I fear almost wherever we turn our eyes, are such, that the democracy must prepare itself for these duties; and it must remember that its affections and duties towards the colonies may perchance cost it trouble and sacrifices; and for those sacrifices, and for that trouble, the democracy must be prepared. (Cheers.) Now, I will tell you what I think would be a great misfortune, and that is, that the new electorate should be easily bored by questions of this kind. I trust that will not be the case; but you know it is rather a British failing to be easily bored. We have sometimes drifted into wars formerly because statesmen were bored, and did not like facing in time the difficulties which occurred in these foreign questions. (Cheers.) It will not be easy, I admit, for the new electorate thoroughly to understand and to master foreign politics; and I am told that everybody must beware of addressing his constituents on these subjects. No; he must not beware. (Cheers.) It is his duty to speak to his constituents upon subjects so vitally affecting the fortunes of the Empire. (Cheers.) If they do not care, he must persuade them to care. (Cheers.) And so I say, Let the new electorate face these questions, and take a constant interest in them, because they will really vitally affect the future fortunes of this country. (Cheers.)

I have spoken to you of your interest in what concerns the colonies. It may be said, perhaps, "We acknowledge all this; but should we not do the same business with our colonies, even if they were not under our own flag?" Experience is not entirely in that direction. I should like to know whether this country would do the same business with India if India were under a

Russian protectorate—which Heaven forbid! (Cheers.) You will remember that goods follow the flag to an extraordinary degree (hear, hear); and, what is more, men follow the flag. They prefer to go to the colonies which belong to the mother country; and the colonies, notwithstanding their protective tariffs, take an infinitely larger proportion from the mother country than from others. I will not try your patience by being statistical this evening. I will reserve my statistics for another audience. I will only tell you this—that our trade with the colonies has stood the depression which has existed with far greater strength than our trade with foreign countries not under our own flag.

But I should be doing an injustice to this subject of our connection with the colonies if I were to speak only of the material advantages which our working-classes will gain and retain by the maintenance of our colonial empire. We have duties to the colonies as well as duties to expect from them. We have duties to the subject races in many parts of the world where our flag has been planted, and we cannot and will not say, in an hour of danger, that we must surrender our position towards those races, or towards those colonists, because we see troubles rising on the horizon. (Cheers.) I hope that you have gone with me to this point—that our colonies are to us a matter of imperial urgency and of imperial duty, and that we cannot shrink from or shirk those duties.

I now come to a part of the subject on which it is my bounden duty to speak, but which may not be so agreeable to you—and that is to explain how the accomplishment of those duties may not be so easy as it has been in times past. But perhaps the very fact that there are some dangers threatening, that the colonies turn with confident hope to the mother country; that there are times when they see that union with the United Kingdom is a matter of the greatest importance to themselves—may draw closer the ties which are already binding the Empire together (cheers); and our colonies, seeing themselves threatened in some vital points, may say, "We are glad of the old country; we see that all the talk of separation, and that we had separate interests, has been false; we see that there are interests which are binding us together." We, from a sense of duty and interest, and the colonies, from a sense of interest and affection, may, at a time like this, perhaps even be drawn closer together. (Cheers.)

I have spoken of some dangers that may threaten the colonies; and I wish to call your attention specially to this—that their

situation as regards Continental Powers has undergone a very serious change during the last five or six years. There was a time when the colonies were considered to be entirely beyond the range of European politics. We had neighbours—we have always had neighbours: but those neighbours showed no restlessness, and the colonies practically said, or were more or less entitled to say, looking at the circumstances of the moment, "What is Europe to us?" That is not the case any longer. I should like to know what our Cape Colony has got to say to that now. I think they would say, that certain European Powers were standing in a very peculiar position to the Cape Colony indeed. I should like to know what the Australian colonies would say. There are colonies which have had before them the question of exportation of criminals by their neighbours; there are colonies which have objected to the establishment of Germans in New Guinea (cheers). And what do the colonies do? Who has to look after the colonies at such a time? It is the mother country (cheers) — it is the United Kingdom. The colonies may feel that, but for their union with us, they might have some very disagreeable passages indeed with the Iron Chancellor, who is not to be trifled with (laughter); or they might find that it was not so easy to produce much effect on the authorities in France. But now we are all acting together; we are acting for the colonies and with the colonies, and I do hope that we shall not turn aside and say, "What troublesome questions these are, and how disagreeable that we have these foreign complications owing to our colonists! After all are they so important to us?" That would be shabby (cheers); that would be unpatriotic. (Cheers.) But it would be worse; it would be foolish; it would be absolutely suicidal; and I shall be much surprised if the working-men, and, in fact, all classes of this Empire, do not see that it is just a moment when it is right to assert that the United Kingdom has to do its duty.

You must allow me now to follow up the argument that I submit to you—namely, that union with the colonies is essential to our Empire, and that our union with the colonies now, in the present state of Europe, makes it impossible for us to overlook the great importance of foreign politics. (Cheers.) I have spoken briefly upon the changed attitude of Europe towards colonial questions. But I wish to put before you more than that. The whole situation of Europe is changed, and vitally changed. This country is placed in a different position from that in which it

has ever been before. You remember how Europe was sub-divided —possibly some of you are too young to remember the immense number of principalities into which Germany was divided; but, at all events, the map of Europe was not what it is like now, when the whole German-speaking population has been brought together, and is subject to the controlling will of one gigantic Power, and that gigantic Power swayed and moved by the will, I had almost said, of one gigantic man. (Cheers.) It is a very different thing to face a Europe divided and sub-divided, and to see Europe massed, I may say, as it is at the present moment—a certain number of Powers uniting for common action, and, above all, Germany and France pulling together—unless it were a more correct expression to say that France is pulled by Germany (hear, hear, and laughter). And we see Germany and Austria not, as before, arrayed in a kind of friendly rivalry, sometimes assuming the form of very considerable diplomatic rivalry, or Germany and Austria at loggerheads; but we see a combination of European Powers, and that combination swayed by the will of a single and most powerful man. I do not think that since the days of the great Napoleon there was more power massed together in the hands of one man (cheers), and united for common action. Their aggregate power is immense; their naval power is not inconsiderable. Four Powers that used to spend eleven millions on their navy are now spending fifteen millions. Of their gigantic military strength I will not say a word; but I wish to point out to you that Europe is combined, and that Europe is now more powerful even at sea than at any other period.

And what will Europe do? What will the attitude of Europe be towards this country? There have been times when we could have looked with absolute indifference upon the combination of Europe for all purposes (cheers); but we cannot be blind to what is passing; for this Europe, which I have thus described—I hope in no exaggerated terms—this Europe has suddenly been seized with a colonising mania, and France and Germany and other powers seem to feel that they must adopt a forward colonial policy, and they push it more or less together; and we, who hitherto have thought that we could do what we liked, when we liked, find ourselves now in face of a very powerful European combination. I am not going to be alarmist in the least, but I wish to put the truth in regard to this matter before you, and the importance of that truth for us. (Cheers.) I do not for one moment believe

that Europe is animated by any particular aggressive, combative, or warlike desires. I have no idea of that kind. They simply wish to have their way as much as they possibly can, and to utilise to the utmost the aggregate power they possess; and, in these circumstances, I think it behoves this country to look very seriously to its position, and to say what, from our point of view, we ought to do; what we can admit, and what we cannot admit. Every country like ours is entitled to maintain its acquired position. (Cheers.) It would be shirking its duty if it did not look facts like these in the face.

I have shown you that Europe is united; I have shown you that although Europe is not aggressive, it is more bent on colonial enterprise than at any other period. There was a period, I might suggest by way of parenthesis, when we had restless neighbours, not in this century but in a previous century, and when we had those restless neighbours we had a very troublesome time. No statesman could then present himself to his constituency without acknowledging that he had paid considerable regard to colonial questions. We have passed through a period when this restlessness had calmed down, but now we find ourselves face to face again with a period of restless colonial movement. I do not say for a moment that we ought to take up any selfish or isolated position in these circumstances, but I wish to say, and I shall endeavour to convey to you and the public, that we ought to make up our minds what we consider essential and what we do not, and then stand by what we consider to be the rights and duty of this country. (Cheers.)

Let me suggest to you one or two illustrations of this common action of Europe. We have seen it in several places; we are seeing it at this moment in Egypt. A combination of powers is attempting, or appears to have been attempting, to dictate to this country the terms which ought to be made, while Gordon is holding Khartoum (cheers), and while our soldiers are pouring out their blood in the deserts of the Soudan. (Cheers.) I have no desire that we should be unreasonable, but I do think that it will be the duty of Her Majesty's Government carefully to weigh to what point concessions can be made.

You see the present action of Europe; you see pressure applied to us which I do not remember in this generation to have seen applied to this country before.

Take the case of the Congo, where a Conference was arranged

on colonial and maritime questions by a Power—Germany—which, till lately, had no colonial interest worth speaking of. And to whom did she address herself to arrange this Congress, which was to determine maritime questions of deep interest to this country? Did Germany come to Great Britain and say, "What shall the basis of this Conference be?" No. Germany went to France, and France and Germany together arranged the preliminaries of a Conference which was to discuss the rights and privileges of Great Britain in her colonial possessions. The despatches relating to that subject are not pleasant reading to the public generally. I am speaking of this not in the way of criticism of any particular action that has been taken; I am wanting to bring home to you that you cannot say we have no concern with foreign matters. Foreign nations are closing in upon many points where we never dreamed of contact with great Powers before.

And now I should like to know what will be the view of the country generally of the attitude which, under these critical circumstances, we ought to take. There is one thing of which I am absolutely certain, and that is that we ought not to hide from ourselves the gravity of the situation. As I said before, we ought to look the facts in the face. (Cheers.) We ought to see what they mean; we ought to examine them; we ought not to put them aside; and if they are worthy of being brought before the attention of the constituencies, we ought to deal with them as men. (Cheers.) I have spoken of the attitude of Prince Bismarck. I do not for one moment believe—and I am very happy to be able to say it—that Prince Bismarck has any particular hostile or unfriendly designs against this country. I do not think that that is his attitude of mind. I do not say that there are not many steps that have been taken that are unfriendly, but when it is said Prince Bismarck has sinister designs against this kingdom or Government, I think it is misreading the position. He is simply—and he is a strong man—decided to have his way if he can possibly have it. (Cheers.) He wishes to remove all obstructions that come in his way, and to remove them very unceremoniously, if he finds that the obstructions do not object particularly to be removed. (Cheers.) He is a very business-like man; he is a cynical man, and he knows his own mind thoroughly. (Laughter.) What I hope is that this country also may make up its mind and know what it wants (cheers); and when Prince Bismarck finds himself face to face with a country

which knows what it wants, I do not believe he will be found anything but a business-like, practical, and sharp statesman to deal with. Supposing that you are playing a rubber of whist with a very clever player, and you fumble with your cards before you play, the clever player knows at once what you have in your hand, and knows why you fumble perfectly well. He is able to know the suit you have got. It is exactly the same with Prince Bismarck. If he finds any fumbling on the part of his adversary, he takes advantage of it. He likes winning points very much; and, besides that, there is a certain satisfaction to a diplomatist and statesman in knowing he has played a very successful game. (Cheers.) I hope this country will not fumble with its cards too much, but that it will know what card to play at the proper moment. (Cheers.) We must make up our minds.

I wish now to be permitted to say a few words upon a subject that does not touch either one Government or another Government; it touches public opinion quite as much as any particular set of statesmen. For many years past the position of the United Kingdom has been such, that we have been able to do what we pleased when we pleased. The consequence has been that this has induced the belief in the minds of many of us that we need not hurry about anything, that we can take our time, that we can shilly-shally, if we like, and that things will come right in the end because this country must have its way. If I read aright the situation of Europe, this is not an attitude of mind that can long continue. And here I will say that I have frequently noticed a phrase that I detest, and against which I once before took the opportunity of making a public protest. The little phrase is this—"After all." I will show you how it is used. People say, "Sir! Egypt is indispensable to the supremacy of England. Egypt is the high road to India; we must defend it at all costs. British supremacy must be maintained in Egypt." Difficulties arise—very great difficulties—and you find the same man going about saying, "After all, is Egypt so very important to us? (Laughter.) After all, have we not been too hasty in our views with regard to Egypt? On the whole, we think we might give it up." Or again, "We have duties to the 800,000 dark men in the Transvaal. These duties we must perform. England is always on the side of the subject races." Then there come immense difficulties, and you hear men going about again—"After all, it is a very long way, and what have we got to do out there?

After all, it would be best that we should mind our own business and not look to those distant countries." (A hiss, and loud cheers.) I do not know whether anybody is in favour of that word "after all," or will back it. I do not know whether the gentleman I heard was against my view of "after all" or against the word itself (laughter); but this I say, if you make up your mind in time you do not need to use the word "after all." I object to the change of front under difficulty and under disaster. (Loud cheers.) It is perfectly arguable whether we should do such or such a thing. It is not arguable, after having maintained any view, that when troubles occur, we should at once turn from it. It is perfectly arguable that we should never annex the Transvaal; but is it arguable, after having undertaken to back up the subject races, to say "After all"? (A voice.—Who are the men to say "After all"?) (Hisses.) Well, I wish I did not know them. (Laughter.) I believe they exist in nearly every society (No, no); they exist in private life, they exist in public life. Surely we might be quite agreed upon this—that, whatever our politics are, that which we have said, we had better stick to. (Cheers.) I have no particular set of men in view. If the gentleman who asked that question thinks I am insinuating anything against any particular body of men, I am not doing so at all. (Hear, hear.) I have known men who began this "after all" business in the year 1865, when Lord Palmerston had come down to the House of Commons and had stated that if Denmark should go to war with Germany she would not find herself standing alone. It made a great impression upon my youthful enthusiasm at that time. A great many members of Parliament then went about saying, "Well, after all, what have we got to do with Denmark?" I do not wish to tread upon the toes of anybody, and I am quite sure that the gentleman who interrupted me would never use the word "after all" himself (hear, hear, and cheers), but it is a word that may lead to much mischief in our political life. It has led to much mischief.

What does it mean, the word "After all?" If it were defined in a dictionary it would be said to be, "A word used occasionally by timid people when they wish to back out from a position which they have taken up." (Laughter.) But I trust that in future political dictionaries we shall find when we open them at that phrase, "An expression once current, but which has become obsolete (loud cheers), and is no longer considered good British style." (Renewed cheers.)

I have often seen aims which have been put forward, philanthropic aims, noble aims, aims of which any nation might be proud; I have regretted when I have seen that in times of difficulty those noble aims have been afterwards more or less repudiated. I say it is not the fault of any political party, but it is the traditional view of the people of this country, a view perfectly justified when the situation was different, that they could enunciate and carry out all those aims, that they could demand reforms in the subject races of other countries, that they could address other Governments in such tones as they pleased. It is essential to remember that now such language can no longer be used with impunity, and it would be wise to discard it, and the one point which I think ought to be impressed upon public opinion in this country is, that we should concentrate our efforts, both in moral and in material respects, that we should not say that we will do more or attempt to do more than we are prepared to carry out, but that upon those points which we think essential either to our duty or to our interests we should be absolutely clear. (Cheers.) Let us give up the idea, that we have got a kind of prerogative to be the rulers in all the unappropriated portions of the globe. (Hear, hear.)

I should be sorry if anything I have said to-night should be misinterpreted, or if it should be for one moment thought that I was speaking in favour of an aggressive policy. (A voice — "Jingo.") Let me dismiss at once that view by saying, if the country thinks it absolutely necessary, let us limit the objects of our ambition and our duties, let us have a strict delimitation of what are our interests and our British duties. What I am contending for is this—that we should have fewer vague and general aspirations and aims, and that we should have more distinct performance in those duties which we have asserted to be ours, and in vindicating those interests which we have said must be ours. (Cheers.) Know your own minds, and then concentrate your efforts upon what you decide.

Might I point to the further tendency, that we often wish to put off liabilities? The great danger of putting off our obligations is that they are returned upon us in greater force afterwards. We fancy there is a liability which we think we may escape from, and we find a little later that it would have been better had we discharged that liability at once. There is such a thing as compound interest in politics as well as in trade. (Hear, hear.)

Take for instance the case of the Soudan. It was thought at one time by a great many people that we could draw a kind of marked line and say we had nothing to do with the Soudan. It reminded me at the time of an old story of two men who were going to fight a duel, and the one said to the other, who was extremely stout, "I will draw a line with chalk upon your stomach, and any thrust I give outside that line shall not count." (Laughter and cheers.) Well, without intending it, he made a thrust outside the line, and it was as deadly as a wound would have been within it. (Laughter and cheers.) So it was, unfortunately, with the Soudan. It was impossible to draw the line. We did not succeed in our limitations, and now we have that gallant expedition, the exploits of which we must read with pride, although we may regret that the expedition ever was necessary. (Cheers.)

I will not pursue the topic of the various occasions on which, if we had acted sooner, greater liabilities might have been avoided. What I want to insist on is that our situation is different now from what it was in times past, and that it is necessary that not only should we make up our minds to concentrate our efforts, but that we should limit our influence to those cases where we intend to make a stand.

Above all, we must have the material force by which we can assert our rights, and by which we can support the words to which we are pledged. (Cheers.) One word about the Army. I do not like to stand on this platform at a time like this and speak of the army without saying one word as to the splendid manner in which our soldiers have performed their duty. (Loud cheers.) The days of military sentimentalism are past, but not the less on that account will every inhabitant of these islands follow with the deepest sympathy those gallant men who have won the admiration of Europe. (Cheers.) They will remember the gallant Gordon, who has shown what an Englishman can do; whose name is now a household word over all Europe, and who shows an Englishman at bay, but using the resources of his genius and courage. (Cheers.) And let me say one word of Lord Wolseley—a reforming soldier, an intellectual soldier—who has known the same energy in carrying out reforms as he shows in his campaigns in the face of the enemy; and of those gallant troops who held in their hands the honour of the British Army, and who showed continental neighbours that if it is not large it is composed of stuff which has never been beaten in the annals of our country. (Cheers.) You must allow me also

to say one word of the Navy, the service over which it was once my high privilege to preside. (Cheers.) Never among any other class of my countrymen did I find a greater sense of duty or a greater desire to assume the proper responsibility in the hour of danger (cheers) than among our naval officers and among the men. (Cheers.) He would scarcely be doing a service to his country who did not boldly face the question as to what the force and the standard of the Navy ought to be. (Cheers.) The Government have wisely increased the strength of the Navy. (Cheers.) I trust that they will not go before their countrymen with any apology for having done so (cheers), but will tell their constituencies that it was necessary for the safety of the public service. As statesmen, they were bound to take this step; as patriots, you are bound to accept it. (Cheers.) You cannot put aside these questions of the strength of the Navy; and why should any apology be necessary, if it is thought to be essential for the public service? I will tell you why it is. The efficiency of a Government is tested by their aggregate expenditure over a certain amount of years. It may very probably happen that, while the Conservatives are loudest in their demands that the Navy should be increased, at the next election the increased estimates due to that very augmentation of the Navy will be made an item of charge against the Government to prove their extravagance. The view is taken, "Let us test the Government by its aggregate expenditure." That is a false test. (Cheers.) The test of a proper economy is, "What do you do with the money which is placed in your hands? Do you avoid waste in the expenditure? Do you make the most of it?" I can fancy a postponement of expenditure infinitely more prejudicial to the public service than the incurring of expenditure. (Hear, hear.) Supposing you postpone your expenditure, and in consequence your repairs or your building in another year cost more than they would have cost, if they had been done in time, the department which has nominally saved on its estimates has been at fault, and has done wrong to the public service. It has not avoided the expenditure; that money does not flow into the pocket of the taxpayer, but it is spent in the next year in the augmentation due to the postponement of the work. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I think they are sometimes unjust stewards of the public purse, who, when they ought to put down 100, put down 50.

What is to be said with regard to the augmentation of the Navy?

It is not we alone in this country who have thought it necessary to increase the naval forces. (Hear, hear.) You cannot apply a fancy standard and say that the Navy ought to be so-and-so large in comparison with previous years; you must look to the time, the duties to be performed, and to the proceedings of neighbouring countries. (Hear, hear.) Let me for one moment turn to neighbouring countries, not to the great military empires, but to democratic and Liberal countries. Look at Italy. Italy is being governed by Ministers who, if they were in the House of Commons, would probably sit below the gangway. That is a fair description of the general attitude of Italian Ministers. They are the Ministers of a democratic country. Italy is burdened with heavy debts. Its finances are improving, but are not in the best condition. Nevertheless, Italy takes it to be, not a matter of ambition or aggressive inclination, but a matter of security to itself to expend large sums upon its Navy, not in the old aristocratic spirit, not in that spirit which is sometimes denounced, but as a matter of essential importance even to a democratic country. Look at France. France is no longer an aristocratic or military country. France is not even a *bourgeois* democracy. It is a utilitarian democracy headed by men of letters and by journalists and lawyers. And democratic France has made greater efforts in the direction of strengthening its navy almost than any of the preceding Governments, not, I believe, from any aggressive views, and certainly not from any aggressive views against this country; but because France knew what it was to have lain at the foot of the conqueror (cheers); she knew how important it was to make sacrifices in time to avoid national danger (cheers); and I do not believe that this country will be behind in making such provision for its naval forces as occasion may demand. Surely the constituencies will gladly respond to such appeals as may be made by Her Majesty's Government, and no statesman need be frightened to propose an increased expenditure if he can show that the changed circumstances of Europe, the grave times in which we live, render that essential.

Once more let me say that foreign and colonial questions are so bound up with home industry and with the prosperity of this country that they cannot be separated. (Cheers.) We cannot speak any longer about having no concern with the affairs of the Continent. That has gone by, because we see the Continent closing around us in some of our colonial possessions. We must, therefore,

face these difficulties, and I venture to say that those men are not exceeding their duty who think that it is necessary and right to bring these matters home to the public audiences they have the privilege to address. (Cheers.) I do not believe that these questions will be put aside by the public as uninteresting, or as of less vital importance than others to which they attribute the greatest possible importance. We Liberals, at least, do not wish to approach this matter in the spirit of that word which has been imported into the language; we do not wish to approach it in the spirit of "Jingo" boastfulness. We are not aggressive, nor do we wish to measure the Empire by this kind of sentiment, "That our Sovereign may rule over an Empire on which the sun never sets." But we must remember the duties imposed upon a great empire such as this. It would be a woeful day for justice, for liberty, for the equal treatment of subject populations if the flag of this country should be lowered, and if we should lose our influence on the whole body of public opinion in Europe. (Cheers.) Our flag is not a flag under which only military glory is to be won. We must remember when the flag of this empire is planted in different countries it means constitutional liberty; we know that, among all the great nations of Europe, our flag means disinterested and moral international conduct (cheers); we know that it is the only flag to which subject races can look with confident expectation and hope (cheers); it is the only flag on which are emblazoned in letters clear and bright, "Justice and mercy to black and white." (Hear, hear.) We know how our warriors abroad fight round that flag, and we shall not shrink at home from such sacrifices as will be needful to maintain its honour. Why, even stripling heroes will hold that flag in distant countries to the death, and we have read how, when shot down, they have clasped the colours of their country to their hearts. (Cheers.) Let an equal sentiment pervade our breasts. This flag is now to be placed in the hands of the new democracy. The old flag will be in its grasp. Let it honour it as it has been honoured hitherto; let it be true to its magnificent trust. (Loud cheers.)

THIRD ADDRESS.

Delivered in Liverpool, on Wednesday, 11th February 1885.

Mr. Goschen said—Gentlemen, this welcome which you have given to me to-night is indeed gratifying. I was grateful for the invitation which was extended to me, but I am still more grateful for the kind manner in which you have received me this evening. Yes, gentlemen; Mr. Oulton was right. I come here as a Liberal, or I should not be here. (Cheers.) I come here as a Liberal to speak to Liberals. (Renewed cheers.) I am aware that some Conservatives have paid me the compliment to say that they agreed with every word of some speeches which I have lately made. (Laughter.) Well, I think it is always important to see what is agreed to when agreement is expressed, so I would venture to remind those gentlemen that, in agreeing with every word that I said, they agree to the proposition that no questions of settlement or entail, or any other consideration, should stand in the way of making the land as saleable as consols (laughter and cheers), and that we ought not to rest until we can see a compulsory registration of titles. (Cheers.) They will further agree that there should be a sweeping measure of local government reform, in which more attention must be paid to vivifying civic life throughout the country than to any of the remnants of magisterial authority. (Hear, hear.) They will further agree, as I understand them, to the transfer of the granting of licences to a local body, instead of keeping it in the hands of the magistrates; they will resist all attacks upon the public funds for the purpose of being agreeable to any particular class; and, above all, they will agree, as I understand them now—I did not understand them before, but I understand them now, to a full, unqualified allegiance to the doctrine of Free Trade. (Laughter and applause.) Well, now, I am uncommonly glad to see that there are many men outside of the Liberal camp who agree to the whole of that programme. (Hear, hear.) But I think, on the whole, looking at the speeches which have been made, that it would be fairer to say, as they do say,

that those gentlemen agree with me than that I agree with them; because, when I recollect their speeches, I confess I have never been able to say that I agreed with every word they said. I have thought that there has been considerable coquetry with Fair Trade. And, gentlemen, let me just suggest one other thought in connection with this. I remember the year 1867, and I have seen something of Tory secrets by reading the interesting and edifying book which Lord Malmesbury has published. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I have also seen something of Tory policy in the course which they have taken with regard to the present redistribution of seats, in which they seem to me to have out-Heroded Herod, and to have been perfectly prepared to put pressure on her Majesty's Government to make the Bill far wider than the Government originally intended. And I have also studied the speeches of Lord Randolph Churchill. (Laughter.) I have learnt from them what are the proclivities of Tory democracy, and I know that those are views which are received with enthusiasm in large towns. Gentlemen, on the whole I am not attracted, and I confess that I am not prepared to agree, to a policy which seems to me simply one of negative and temporary resistance, tempered by a system of frequent over-trumping of the measures which your adversaries propose. (Laughter and applause.)

But, gentlemen, I can assure you very sincerely, that I have not come here to talk about myself, nor even of party politics; nor will I be tempted by either your kind reception or the opportunity given me, to break a lance with my friend Mr. Morley, who has thrown down a challenge to me. Though I am a moderate man, I can assure you I am also a fighting man, always willing to take up a challenge which has been thrown down. But this is not the arena in which I should wish to answer points which I think I might be able to answer. No, gentlemen, my view in coming here was that I should address you, as I understood I should be permitted to do, mainly on colonial and foreign topics. (Applause.) But events have occurred since I received your kind invitation which induce me to think that on the whole your mind will mainly be fixed on occurrences which have been passing in Africa. But even with regard to those very events, I should wish to make two observations bearing on the colonies. The more we take account of colonial feeling, the more we take account of the colonists, the more I think shall we find that they will be prepared to show con-

sideration to the necessities of our imperial policy. (Hear, hear.) And the stronger we show ourselves, whenever it is necessary to show ourselves strong, the more will the colonies be attracted to the mother country. (Hear, hear.) If they find us, when troubles arise, to be strong, cool, calm and self-confident, I believe it will not fail to exercise a great power over them (hear, hear); and I believe that it is by such an attitude we shall do most to increase the strength of the Empire, and to knit closer and closer the ties which bind and hold all parts of it together. (Applause.)

But you will wish me to pass, I think, without further delay, to those events in the Soudan, and the work which is before us there, which are now absorbing almost every one's mind. Let me refrain from rhetoric on the subject. The most vivid pens in England, and many of the most eloquent lips, have been busy in setting before the public the latest story of British heroism and its tragic end. Word-painting is not necessary to heighten the dramatic effect; and I think that little rhetoric is needed to stir the hearts of every countryman of Gordon to answer any appeal that may be made to him for sacrifice or effort. (Hear, hear.) Even party spirit is hushed, or almost hushed, for the moment. I ventured to say at Edinburgh the other day that if foreign troubles should arise, and if party warfare should be suspended for a moment, foreign nations would be surprised at the decision with which the voice of this country would speak, and at the swiftness with which effect would be given to its will. I did not think that the moment would arise so soon when these foreign troubles would come. But now we have seen the country almost speaking as one man. It feels that a blow has been struck which has touched the national honour (hear, hear); and we see a unanimity, a striking unanimity of feeling, throughout. (Hear, hear.) The Government and the people, the platform and the press, have all been speaking the same language. Energetic orders have been given to General Wolseley, with *carte blanche* to carry them out; and the country is showing that high spirit which it always shows when troubles and difficulties really and actually become serious. (Cheers.)

I think I shall have most of you with me when I say that it is not enough to show that spirit in meeting, as we are meeting, the Egyptian difficulty with vigorous patriotism. That spirit ought to

be equally shown in refusing to be so absorbed and exhausted by that one subject as to be unable to look at other matters. (Hear, hear.) There were, before the fall of Khartoum, events happening abroad which were serious, and no one can watch the course of occurrences on the Continent at this moment without feeling that there is considerable need for watchfulness elsewhere than in Egypt. The situation in which we find ourselves now is not so different that we can afford to dispense with that watchfulness elsewhere. On the contrary, I feel that there is even greater necessity now for the country having its eyes open all round.

It would be wrong indeed for any one to minimise the fact of the fall of Khartoum, or its effect upon British credit, upon the safety of our troops, or upon the safety of Egypt Proper. But I also venture to think that it would be wrong to exaggerate the disaster, or to treat in any exaggerated manner the occurrence of a contingency which has been in the minds of many of us as a contingency which might possibly occur, and as not so very remote. We ought not to be thrown off our heads by the fall of Khartoum. (Hear, hear.) I have seen language made use of as if it were a military disaster; and I am not quite sure whether Mr. Gibson did not say so the other day in Dublin. (Hear, hear.) But no disaster has happened to British arms. (Cheers.) Their honour is untarnished. Our soldiers have almost done the impossible, and the fall of Khartoum has followed, not on a defeat, but on the victory even of our troops. No doubt there has been a blow to British credit, but it would be wrong for any one to hold up the sad and tragic occurrences which have taken place as if they were a defeat to the British arms. And as it is not due to any military failure that Khartoum has fallen, so surely it is not only to the sword that we must look to retrieve the blow which we have suffered. The blow is one to British credit. The Cabinet have recognised the necessity of retrieving it, and the country will stand by the Cabinet in the resolution they have taken. I cannot add to the eloquent words in which Mr. Trevelyan spoke upon the subject last night. It is not our soldiers who have suffered defeat; but no doubt it will be to them we must look—and we shall look with confidence—to beat back that wave of Eastern fanaticism which possibly may roll down upon Egypt Proper. (Hear, hear.)

Let us remember—and it is important that we should remember—what we have to do. We shall not go forward in a simply revengeful spirit. (Applause.) We shall not go forward

simply with a haughty wish that we must conquer and win, but we shall be inspired by feeling that no great nation with subject races under it can, in the interests of those subject races themselves, retire beaten and foiled. (Applause.) We shall remember that, in the interests of Western civilisation, we have our duties to a country which we have engaged to protect. We shall remember that that is the spirit in which we must go forward. We have to think, too, of saving Egypt; and clearly it is most important that foreigners should remember that that is part of our difficulty—that we are not simply vindicating British prestige, but that we are doing work in the interest of Europe itself. (Hear, hear.)

I rejoice to see that the Germans are beginning to show sympathy with England in the situation in which we find ourselves. It was only what we should expect of them, for the Germans admire a display of strength; and they see now that the country is determined to put forward its strength, and they respect that spirit. They have been educated to it in a very hard school themselves (hear, hear), and they have little sympathy with moral or material weakness. (Hear, hear.) And it is pleasant to see the gallant Italians, who seem to wish to prove that ingratitude is not a charge that can be laid against all nations, and that they harbour in their memory recollections of the services that have been rendered to them by this country and its Government. They have not forgotten how England has stood by Italy on many an occasion, and I rejoice to see that there is so much fellow-feeling between the two countries. (Applause.)

And if there is a rising tide of sympathy for us abroad, we must not forget to whom, in a great measure, we owe that sympathy. We owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to that gallant army and its skilful chiefs who, at the very moment when Khartoum was falling, struck dismay into the wild hordes of the desert, and who redeemed the reputation of this country in the eyes of Europe as regards military ability. (Applause.) May we hope that the admiration that we all feel for our soldiers, and for the skill with which they are led, may hold out during some dreary months which may possibly lie before us, when the patience of this country may be tried very severely? We cannot expect, looking to the climate and to all the great difficulties of the situation, that our soldiers will be able to advance very fast. And it would be, I think, very hard upon the generals if there were to be any premature and rash criticism of the operations which they may think it neces-

sary to undertake, while their mouths will be closed, and they will not be able to say a word in their own defence.

Look at the case of the march on Metammeh, that famous race against time. Lord Wolseley knew that there was danger of treachery in Khartoum itself, but, of course, it was neither his business nor the business of the Government to reveal that fear. He knew it, he acted upon it, and he ran risks that might not otherwise be advisable, and so risked his military reputation, because it was right, and ordered that splendid march across the desert in the face of military criticism. (Cheers.) I know Lord Wolseley well. He has all the courage to undertake responsibilities as well as to face the bullets of the enemy. (Cheers.) He is no hot-headed soldier; he is a calm-judging, cool-headed, man of the world. (Hear, hear.) He has certainly a burning sense with regard to the honour of his country, and a desire to serve it faithfully, but he is as steady as a rock, and as cheery as a breezy summer's day. (Cheers.) That is Lord Wolseley, and he is the man for the situation. (Renewed cheers.) He will stand by the honour of his country, and I trust the country will stand by him, and that he may not be condemned for any operations which may not fall in with the criticisms of the day, but that the country will remember that Lord Wolseley has so far never failed when he has undertaken an expedition in its cause. (Loud cheers.) I think it is terribly hard sometimes upon officers in the field, when the news from home arrives to which they look forward with intense longing, and they find it full of strictures upon their conduct—strictures made in ignorance of the plans they are carrying out. (Hear, hear.)

Take the case of my friend Sir Charles Wilson. No one can have read without feelings of pride and emotion the accounts of the imperturbable coolness with which Sir Charles Wilson took command when Sir Herbert Stewart had been wounded, and how he ordered and executed that march to the river for water, which tried the nerves of the strongest, and where failure would have meant annihilation. (Cheers.) I can say nothing—I know nothing—of the strategical capacities of Sir Charles Wilson; but I do know him to be a man of singularly strong character—extremely quiet, extremely reserved, but with a reserve of strength which has always made the deepest impression upon every one with whom he has come in contact; and—it is sad now to remember it—he was an intimate friend of Gordon

himself, and had been cheered through months of toil by the thought that, perchance, he might be the man who would first grasp Gordon by the hand. (Applause.) And is he the man on whom the reproach should fall—as I see that it has been hinted in some quarters—that he had unnecessarily delayed his ascent of the river to Khartoum, which, it is alleged, with his 50 or 100 men, he possibly might have saved had he not been too late? I confess that it almost cuts me to the heart to think how such suggestions must wound a brave and a sensitive man. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Our officers are accustomed to face bullets with the greatest coolness; but there are other missiles with which they are sometimes pelted which perhaps inflict even more painful wounds. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, you will forgive me, I hope, the warm words which I have spoken upon this subject. (Applause.)

But it is not only that I hold Sir Charles Wilson in high honour and esteem as a strong, conscientious man; I frankly say, that I have said what I have said with reference also to the future. Let us remember the situation—that risks may have to be run which, according to all the ordinary rules of war, ought not to be run, but which, in the circumstances, may almost be absolutely necessary, and, by the indomitable valour of our soldiers, may succeed. An immense responsibility is now placed upon our generals. They will not falter under it. It is a high honour to have *carte blanche* at such a moment from your country. But we cannot conceal from ourselves that there may possibly be failures here and there, and I deprecate visiting forthwith any isolated failures upon the heads of the officers commanding the expedition. (Applause.) Her Majesty's Government have in my judgment, and I believe in the judgment of the country, done their duty in placing the trust they have placed, as regards the execution of the objects which they have prescribed—in placing it with absolute freedom—in the hands of Lord Wolseley. (Hear, hear.) But the Government, of course, must share with the General a certain responsibility for failure and success. It is they who must define the objects which he is to carry out. (Hear, hear.) It is they who must say to what extent, for instance, the power of the Mahdi ought to be broken up. They must say to what extent, looking to the empire at large, looking to the Mussulmans in India, it is necessary to restore British prestige, and it is they who must say what far-reaching measures are necessary for the safety of

Egypt. I see it is questioned in some quarters whether the safety of Egypt is concerned in this question at all. Those on the spot, as I understand, declare that the safety of Egypt is involved in the operations that are to be undertaken, and that any premature withdrawal of our forces would imperil the safety of Egypt Proper—(hear, hear). And it is very essential to bear that in mind—very essential, for reasons that I will indicate in a moment. For we are not only, as I have said, acting for ourselves in this matter, but Europe—the Continental Powers—are concerned in our operations for the safety of Egypt.

And now let me ask—What Egypt is it for which we are called upon to act, and for the safety of which we are to sacrifice our troops in the desert of Bayuda lest the Mahdi's troops should swoop down on the rich and cultivated provinces? Is it even at this moment an international Egypt? Lord Wolseley is to have a free hand at Korti. Are we to have a free hand at Cairo? Lord Wolseley has received *carte blanche* in the Soudan; and I wish to know, would it be right that the heavy pen of Germany and Russia should write orders across the *carte blanche* which Great Britain ought to retain in Egypt? (Applause.)

I should like to know what is the meaning of the claim which Germany and Russia have lately put forward for representation on the Commission of the Public Debt in Egypt. What does it mean? It can only mean one thing—that they wish to increase their *locus standi* for interference, and to swell the majority of the Powers on that Commission when they desire to put pressure on Great Britain. (Hear, hear.) Now, mark this! This Commission of the Public Debt was established in 1876. It existed in the time of Ismail Pasha; it existed in the time of Arabi: and in all those times of peril to foreign international interests Germany and Russia never thought those interests so near to themselves as to insist on a representation upon that body, and it is not until Great Britain has taken the matter in hand that they think it right to insist in this manner. But why should they wish to control Great Britain if they did not think it necessary to control Ismail Pasha? (Hear, hear.) And if it be argued that when we evacuate Egypt, then in the common interest it would be best that two such Powers as Germany and Russia should be represented on that Commission, well and good; let the claim be considered when that moment arises. But at a moment like this—at a moment when we alone are bearing the burden in Egypt—to put forward a claim such as

that, I confess, seems to me to be unreasonable; and, grave as the situation is, I do not think it a claim which ought to be admitted. (Hear, hear.)

Look again at the international guarantee. Was there ever such an extraordinary anxiety to assume financial liability as we have seen on the part of the Powers upon this occasion? (Hear, hear.) What does it mean? Why is there this rush to assume pecuniary responsibility? There has never been anything like it before. Yes, there has; it is when money-lenders press their services on young men of fortune in order to get them body and soul into their hands. This claim for an international guarantee, we cannot disguise it from ourselves, means the internationalisation of Egypt; and it means, I will not say immediate multiple control, but that the Powers intend to make immediate arrangements so as to have the automatic means of getting multiple control the moment they think it necessary. If this international guarantee means more—if it means that even now it is to give any administrative or financial control whatever, now while our soldiers are in Egypt, and if the Government should not avoid every chance or risk or shadow of a risk of any interference, administrative or financial, to hamper us in Egypt, while our soldiers alone are fighting battles in Egypt and British taxpayers alone are bearing the cost—I say that it is a guarantee which I don't think Parliament ought to vote.

I admit that the difficulties are extremely great, but again I say, let us be reasonable all round, and if reasonable claims are put forward by the Powers, let us meet them in a calm, temperate, and conciliatory manner. But if unreasonable demands are put forward, I believe the country will back the Government in resisting them. (Cheers.)

Now, there is one point on which I should like to make a very urgent appeal. It is not in a moment of difficulty—I do not like to say a moment of disaster—it is not in a moment of serious difficulty that we ought to show ourselves in any degree squeezable. (Cheers.) If we show ourselves squeezable, all the Continental Powers who think that they may gain some advantage may say, "Now is our opportunity, let us put pressure upon England." I hold that this empire is too large, our interests are too vast, and I trust our resources are too great, for us to allow an isolated failure or success at one point to influence our whole diplomacy. (Cheers.) There are few dangers greater than this—that the ebb and flow of our public opinion should be too much at the mercy of the storms of the

moment. What we have to do is to look these matters very quietly in the face. I know it was said, if Sir Herbert Stewart had succeeded in rescuing Khartoum, that then our diplomatic course would have been considerably easier. That may or may not be so, but I don't want the converse to be true. (Cheers.) I want this event not to so influence the mind of the public, or of our statesmen, that we should now yield on any point where we should not have yielded before. That seems to me to be the attitude that we should take up.

And in using this language, I am not speaking in the air. I say, that if ever there was need that this country should show itself firmer than before, it is now. I will not hide from you that I am considerably disquieted by rumours which I hear with regard to the attitude of Russia. "What," you will say, "have we not enough trouble in the Soudan, that you are going to bother us to-night by reminding us of Russia?" Well, I am afraid I must; and again, I say, I hope that the occurrence of a contingency, for which it was necessary we should be prepared, will not induce this country to bolt from positions which we vowed we would maintain as essential. (Hear, hear.) I said I was not speaking in the air. I would not speak as I am doing now, if there was nothing going on; but if what I hear is true, there is something going on. We are very much absorbed now by events in the Soudan, and we have forgotten, possibly, that we have got Afghan Boundary Commissioners who have been kicking their heels for a long time on the frontiers of Afghanistan, while the Russian Commissioners are either suffering from colds, or enjoying domestic festivities at Tiflis. The Russians are not keeping the engagement they made to join us in the delimitation of the Afghan frontier. Her Majesty's Government apparently thought it essential that frontier investigations should be made on the spot, and that the two Powers together, in a friendly manner, through commissioners, should examine those frontiers; but for some reason or other—I cannot undertake to say what reason—Russia is not keeping to that engagement; and I understand that she now desires here, in London, to conclude a treaty, thinking that she may get more favourable terms, without waiting for the results of any investigation on the spot. If that were so, our commissioners would have to be recalled. Now, if it were possible and right to come to a conclusion here, in London, without any knowledge gathered on the spot, why, in the name of common-sense, was

an expedition sent—a costly expedition, and a very delicate one as bearing on Afghan feeling? Why was it sent? If, on the other hand, it was necessary to get this information, why, in the name of our national credit, should we at this moment abandon that ground? I hope we shall not abandon that ground. (Applause.) Why should it be necessary to abandon that ground in order to treat on a perfectly different basis? I want to know, Is Russia again playing a game of which she is extremely fond, which is to put pressure on at inconvenient moments, thinking at such times she will gain advantages which otherwise would not be accorded? What I maintain is this—if these matters bear on the future of India, if they are of vital importance to our Indian empire, then let us wait and negotiate and settle them when we are free, when the Government and the country can give their full attention to these matters, when we shall not be at a disadvantage, and when we shall not be thought to be at a disadvantage. But till then, we ought to stand by our position, and maintain the ground which we have taken up. (Applause.)

It may be said, "What! how can we act with this Egyptian mill-stone round our neck?" I am not prepared to admit that at any time this Empire should have a mill-stone round its neck; I am not prepared to admit that matters on which we have set our hearts, such as the frontier of India, should be determined according to a temporary difficulty in the Soudan. (Applause.)

I am convinced that the honourable solution of the difficulties in which we find ourselves will mainly depend upon the view taken by Europe as to the determination of this country, and all will depend on the removal of any impression of weakness or "squeezability" on our part. (Cheers.) Don't let me be misunderstood. Doubtless there is hostility to this country in many parts of Europe; but, as I have said before, and should like to say emphatically again, I do not believe that the feeling of Europe generally is one pointedly directed against the interests of Great Britain. (Hear, hear.) They know on the Continent what they want, and the best thing that can happen is that they should know what we want and by what we are prepared to stand. (Loud cheers.) I am not one of those who think that we can be indifferent to the opinion of the Continent as regards ourselves. I venture to say that public opinion abroad at this moment may mean pressure at an inconvenient time, or it may mean friendly support. Public opinion may determine

intrigues against us if there is distrust of us, or it may determine alliances for us if there is trust. And so I say we cannot be indifferent to it. I wonder how far you go with me in that view, because I know there were times when we felt a very considerable indifference to public opinion upon the Continent. Those were days before the concert of Europe had been invented. In those times when Europe was still entirely sub-divided, in what I may call the ante-Bismarckian days, when no groups of Powers were combined together, and in those times when we fondly thought our navy a match for every possible combination that could be brought against us within any reasonable political probability—in those days it might fairly be argued that we could be indifferent to foreign public opinion. (Hear, hear.) But now, when we have constant conferences—some summoned by us, some, I am sorry to say, summoned against us—we feel how much the view that the various Powers of Europe may take of us may affect our interests and our power in the centre of those conferences. So I say again that we cannot be indifferent to public opinion abroad.

I trust, gentlemen, that, in making these remarks, you will acquit me of any wish to raise any difficulties or to create any alarmist spirit; but, feeling these matters strongly, pray forgive me if I have taken an opportunity of putting them before some of my countrymen. (Applause.) We are very much misunderstood on the Continent, and the question is, Is it worth while, and is it possible, if it is worth while, to remove any of these misunderstandings? I say it is, if it can be done; because misunderstandings alienate friends; they create enemies, and they turn from us support which we otherwise might have. Well now, all countries, probably, would say that they were misunderstood. I venture to think that we are doubly misunderstood. And I will tell you why. It is partly because we are—excuse the expression—a speechifying nation (laughter), and have a great dose of sentiment and philanthropy in our composition; and, what with our platforms and what with our philanthropy, we jar on the cynical and military spirit which exists on the Continent. We are conscious, and at no moment have we been more conscious of our sincerity than at present, that the whole spirit of our international policy has been raised. (Hear, hear.) We believe that we are more disinterested at this moment than we have been at other times of our national history. (Hear, hear.) But we have intense difficulty in bringing this home to the minds

of foreigners, and it is partly because there are sometimes rapid transitions of public opinion here. We make quick changes of front which they do not understand; and sometimes they seem to think that we begin in a passionately moral manner, but that after a certain time we keep a very good lookout upon our material and our pecuniary interests (laughter), and at another time that we begin with a perfectly natural clamour for our material and commercial interests, but that, under stress of circumstances, we invent, *ex post facto*, splendid moral maxims to cover our retracting. (Laughter.)

I can illustrate what I mean by a very familiar illustration. If we had got a friend who went out hunting, and he were to find the fences extremely stiff, and he were to trot home again and declare that fox-hunting was an immoral sport (a laugh) we should smile. And so sometimes when we have thought it right to execute a retreat, Continental Powers have smiled, and their smile has not always been extremely good-natured or complimentary. And what I do feel strongly is this—that it would be wiser on our part to make up our minds as to what our duties and our interests are, than to widen them by language, as we constantly do. I would wish there were more consecutiveness—I am not thinking of the Foreign Office only, but I am thinking of our public opinion. It would be better that we were more consecutive in the views we take, and also that we should concentrate our efforts more.

I hope you have agreed with a good deal of what I have said, and I know you are going to agree with what I am about to say now, and that is that our interests and our duties are so vast that it would be folly to go out of our way, as we have sometimes done, to increase them (loud cheers), and going out of our way to alienate our friends.

I had an interesting conversation once with some German Liberal leaders with regard to their support of the foreign policy of Prince Bismarck; and I rather rallied them upon the fact that the German Liberals never seemed to come forward to take any part with the rest of the Liberals of Europe in fostering and assisting a Liberal foreign policy. They were always upon the side of the militaryism of Prince Bismarck. They candidly confessed why that was so; they said, "The unity of the German empire is too recent for us to be able to afford any policy of that kind. What we have got to do is simply to look to the immediate interests of the German Empire." Well, now, we are an old Empire, and not a new one, and we have our traditional ways; but I doubt

whether we can much longer afford ourselves the luxury of indulging too much in what I may call platonic aspirations. We must remember with whom we have to deal, and with what we have to deal. You may remember Prince Bismarck's famous phrase lately used, "*Do ut des*," which the *Pall Mall Gazette* freely translated into our vulgar idiom as "Scratch my back, and I will scratch yours" (laughter), but which I would wish to put into more refined but less vigorous language, as "A policy of exchange of friendly offices based upon an avowed self-interest of the parties." (Laughter.) That is what we have got to face on the Continent. We shall not follow that tack, but we shall remember in all our dealings, I trust, with European Powers, that that is the maxim which now has been set up—an exchange of friendly offices on the avowed basis of self-interest. We must see how to deal with this situation; we shall deal with it, I trust, as this country has dealt with difficulties before—without any excitement, and without any alarm, and without any agitation; but I call attention to it on this occasion because I am so anxious that the attention of this country should not be preoccupied so entirely with one isolated expedition in the Soudan, as not to face boldly the whole of the European situation. (Cheers.) We are being squeezed in Egypt by France, with the connivance of Europe. We are being squeezed in South Africa by Germany. We are being squeezed on our Afghan frontiers by Russia. Gentlemen, this cannot go on much longer. This will not do. We are not going to hold, I trust, the mill-stone doctrine to which I have alluded before. We are not going to allow ourselves to be weighed down by one difficulty; and if it is said, "Why, there is such an absorption of our forces in Egypt that we cannot help ourselves?"—well then, I ask, Are our forces of a stereotyped standard? Sooner than admit this doctrine that we cannot help ourselves, we must add, if it be necessary, 20,000 men to the army, and set every dockyard in the country to work. I say, if it be necessary. But one thing is certain, that we must bear the weight upon our shoulders with a straight back and an unwavering spirit. (Cheers.) Do not let us localise our heroics in Egypt. Let us keep our heads there. Calmness in the Soudan and firmness elsewhere, that is the essential point at the present moment. Let us keep cool then, and, if it be necessary, let us raise our forces to the strength which our needs demand, and let us make up our minds, and make others feel that we have made up our minds, that we will stand no nonsense. (Loud cheers.)